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(54) Title: HYDROLYTICALLY UNSTABLE COMPOSITIONS

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to a new stable oral pharmaceutical formulation comprising: a) a nucleus formed by a core; b) a first layer that comprises a polymer coating sealing the core and optionally one or more hydrophobic excipients; and c) a second layer coating the first layer, wherein said second layer comprises one or more labile pharmaceutically active compounds in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients.

Hydrolytically unstable compositions

This invention relates to stable formulations comprising unstable pharmaceutically active compounds, in particular formulations containing hydrolytically unstable active compounds with an imidazoline moiety.

5 The invention also relates to a process for the production of the above formulations.

The pharmaceutical industry employs a variety of dosage formulations for orally administering medicinal agents to patients. An important aspect of the manufacture, regulatory review and approval of all dosage forms concerns their stability over extended periods of time. It is well recognized that the moisture content of the product can 10 influence its stability. Therefore precautions must be taken not to alter the product in the effort to obtain stabilized formulations, by insuring that processing does not change the product with the introduction of moisture.

The use of a barrier layer to protect the pharmaceutically active compound from degradation caused by the enteric coating or by the environment is well known in the art 15 (as described, for example, in US 5,626,875). It is also well known to use a core which is coated with a pharmaceutical compound in conjunction with a binder agent (as described, for example, in EP 519,144). Other references also deal with stability problems by incorporating stabilizing excipients to the formulation (as described, for example, in WO 94/407493 or in US 4,743,450). To date, stability problems caused by direct contact or 20 interaction of labile therapeutically active drugs with ingredients of the core resulting in degradation of the drug have not yet been addressed. Particular stability problems of imidazoline drugs may arise when the active compound comes in contact with humidity in the presence of the core. Stability problems in this context have not been addressed.

In the case of certain formulations containing an active compound at very low 25 dosages (e.g. an imidazoline moiety) and conventional excipients, degradation of the active compound was observed. It was found that, although not hygroscopic, the compound was unstable and underwent hydrolysis in the conventional environments of solid formulations involving solid cores, e.g., beads.

US 5,626,875 assigned to Esteve Quimica refers to certain stabilized galenic formulations comprising an acid labile benzimidazole compound.

WO 94/07493 assigned to Warner-Lambert Co. refers to certain stabilized formulations containing the cognition activator CI-979 HCl comprising adipic acid as an 5 excipient.

US 5,362,860 assigned to Warner-Lambert Co. refers to a certain neutral stabilization complex for CI-979 HCl by formation of a complex with cyclic polydextrose.

US 4,743,450 assigned to Warner-Lambert Co. refers to a certain stabilized formulation containing a metal-containing stabilizer and a saccharide.

10 US 5,338,548 assigned to Parmetrix Co. refers to a certain method for increasing the storage stability of physostigmine by incorporating the free base into a polymer matrix.

US 5,711,954 assigned to Schering-Plough HealthCare Products, Inc. refers to a certain stable powder formulation comprising an effective amount of an imidazole antifungal compound, and talc coated with a hydrophobic coating.

15 EP 519,144 assigned to Ilsan Ilac Ve Hammaddelelri Sanayi A.S. refers to a certain production method for enteric coated pellets containing Omeprazole which is coated on a core in the form of pH buffered dispersion phase.

All publications, patents, and patent applications cited herein, whether *supra* or *infra*, are each hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

20 The object of the present invention is therefore directed to a pharmaceutical formulation which reduces the degradation of the labile pharmaceutically active compound.

This object is achieved, according to the invention, by a pharmaceutical formulation as claimed in claim 1.

25 The present invention has the advantage of isolating the core from the active pharmaceutical compound with an enteric polymer layer providing an acidic micro environment, which may result in greater stability of the labile pharmaceutical composition.

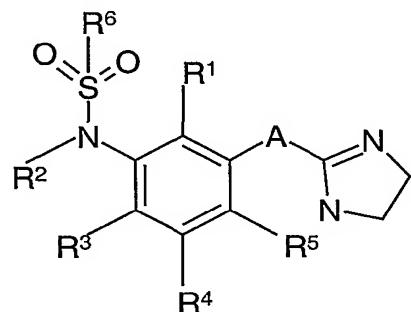
30 In another aspect, this invention relates to a stabilized oral pharmaceutical formulation comprising a nucleus formed by a core, a first layer that comprises an enteric

polymer sealing the core, a second layer coating the first layer that comprises a labile pharmaceutically active compound in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients.

In another embodiment a third layer that comprises an enteric polymer may coat the second layer to further stabilize the formulation, to prevent degradation by gastric fluid and enzymes, or to provide delayed or sustained release medication.

5 In another embodiment the first polymer layer is a hydrophobic enteric polymer, preferably selected from the group comprising acrylic polymers, alkylcelluloses and mixtures thereof. Even more preferably, the pharmaceutical formulation comprises the first polymer layer comprising a hydrophobic polymer selected from the group comprising 10 shellac and EudragitTM, preferably series L or S.

In a preferred embodiment, the invention relates to galenic formulations wherein the labile pharmaceutically active compound is susceptible to hydrolytic degradation, more preferably the labile pharmaceutically active compound contains an imidazoline moiety, even more preferably the labile pharmaceutically active compound has a formula Ar-A-B, 15 wherein Ar is a substituted aryl group, A is -NH-, -CH₂- or -OCH₂-, and B is 2-imidazoline. In another more preferred embodiment the labile pharmaceutically active compound is a compound of Formula I:



20

wherein :

A is -NH-, -CH₂-, or -OCH₂-;

R¹, R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are each independently in each occurrence hydrogen, (C₁-C₆) alkyl, or halogen;

R⁶ is (C₁-C₆) alkyl;

25

R² is hydrogen or (C₁-C₆) alkyl, or

R^2 and R^3 taken together with the atoms to which they are attached may form a 5- or 6- membered ring;

Preferably, the labile pharmaceutically active compound is a compound of Formula I, wherein A is $-OCH_2-$, R^1 and R^6 are methyl, R^3 is chloro, and R^2 , R^4 and R^5 are hydrogen, 5 named N -[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1*H*-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

Processes for the preparation of compounds of Formula I, and in particular of N -[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1*H*-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide, are disclosed in U.S. Patent No.5,952,362.

10 Another aspect of this invention relates to a process for the manufacture of a formulation containing a labile pharmaceutically active compound which comprises coating a core with a first layer sealing the core, wherein said first layer comprises an enteric polymer layer and optionally one or more hydrophobic excipients such as but not limited to talc, in a non-aqueous solvent such as dehydrated alcohol (200 proof); drying 15 said first layer; coating said first layer with a second layer, wherein said second layer comprises the labile pharmaceutically active compound suspended in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients in a non-aqueous solvent such as but not limited to dehydrated alcohol (200 proof); drying the second layer; optionally coating the second layer with a third layer, wherein said third layer comprises an enteric polymer in a non- 20 aqueous solvent such as but not limited to dehydrated alcohol (200 proof), providing further stabilization, or allowing delayed or sustained release; and drying the third layer. In a more preferred embodiment the pharmaceutically active compound is a compound of Formula I, and in another preferred embodiment the pharmaceutically active compound is a compound of Formula I, wherein A is $-OCH_2-$, R^1 and R^6 are methyl, R^3 is chloro, and 25 R^2 , R^4 and R^5 are hydrogen, named N -[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1*H*-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide.

An additional aspect of the invention relates to a method of treatment of urinary incontinence comprising administering a stable oral pharmaceutical formulation comprising a nucleus formed by a core, a first layer, wherein said first layer comprises a 30 hydrophobic enteric polymer layer sealing the core and optionally one or more excipients; a second layer coating the first layer, wherein said second layer comprises a pharmaceutically active compound of Formula I, wherein A is $-OCH_2-$, R^1 and R^6 are methyl, R^3 is chloro, and R^2 , R^4 and R^5 are hydrogen, named N -[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1*H*-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide, in one or more

acceptable hydrophobic excipients; in a more preferred embodiment the invention relates to a method of treatment of urinary incontinence comprising administering a stable oral pharmaceutical formulation comprising a nucleus formed by a core, a first layer, wherein said first layer comprises a hydrophobic enteric polymer layer and optionally one or more hydrophobic excipients sealing the core, a second layer coating the first layer, wherein said second layer comprises a pharmaceutically active compound of Formula I, wherein A is -OCH₂-, R¹ and R⁶ are methyl, R³ is chloro, and R², R⁴ and R⁵ are hydrogen, named N-[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1H-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide, in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients, and a third layer coating the second layer comprising an enteric polymer in a non-aqueous solvent providing further stabilization, or allowing delayed or sustained release.

In another embodiment, the method of treatment comprises administering the stable formulations in a capsule or pellet form.

Unless otherwise stated, the following terms used in this application, including the specification and claims, have the definitions given below. It must be noted that, as used in the specification and the appended claims, the singular forms "a", "an," and "the" include plural referents unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

"Alkyl" means the monovalent linear or branched saturated hydrocarbon radical, having from one to six carbon atoms inclusive, unless otherwise indicated. Examples of lower alkyl radicals include, but are not limited to, methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, 1-ethylpropyl, sec-butyl, tert-butyl, n-butyl, n-pentyl, n-hexyl and the like.

"Aryl" means the monovalent aromatic carbocyclic radical consisting of one individual ring, or one or more fused rings in which at least one ring is aromatic in nature, which can optionally be substituted with one or more, preferably one or two, substituents selected from hydroxy, cyano, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, halo, haloalkyl, hydroxyalkyl, nitro, alkoxy carbonyl, amino, alkylamino, alkylsulfonyl, arylsulfonyl, alkylaminosulfonyl, arylaminosulfonyl, alkylsulfonyl amino, arylsulfonyl amino, alkylaminocarbonyl, arylaminocarbonyl, alkylcarbonyl amino, arylcarbonyl amino, unless otherwise indicated. Alternatively two adjacent atoms of the substituents taken together with the atoms to which they are attached may also form a 5- to 7- membered ring. Examples of aryl radicals include, but are not limited to, phenyl, naphthyl, indanyl, 3-methanesulfonyl amino-phenyl, and the like.

"Halogen" means the radical fluoro, bromo, chloro, and/or iodo.

"Excipient" means any inert component admixed with or co-incorporated with the therapeutically active agent onto the surface of or into the substrate. Excipients may act to facilitate incorporation of the therapeutically active agent onto or into the substrate, modify the release of the therapeutically active agent from the substrate, stabilize the 5 therapeutically active agent, or enhance absorption of the therapeutically active agent. Pharmaceutical excipients are disclosed in "Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences," 17th Ed (1985), pp.1603-1644, which is incorporated herein by reference. The formulation of therapeutically active agent and excipients is selected according to criteria well known to those skilled in the art to achieve the desired release rate, stability, absorption and 10 facilitation of dosage form manufacture. Excipients in solid formulations include, but are not limited to, diluents, binders, lubricants, disintegrants, colors, flavors, and sweeteners. Solvents may be considered as excipients but will be eliminated in the final form.

Suitable binders for use in the present formulation include but are not limited to synthetic gums such as hydroxypropyl methylcellulose ("HPMC"), hydroxypropyl cellulose 15 ("HPC", e.g. KlucelTM), carboxymethylcellulose, ethylcellulose and methylcellulose, starch, gelatin sugars and natural gums, preferably hydroxypropyl cellulose (e.g. KlucelTM).

Suitable solvents for use in the present formulation are non-aqueous solvents, and include but are not limited to dehydrated alcohols, preferably ethanol (200 proof).

Another suitable excipient for use in the present formulation is talc added to reduce 20 the stickiness of coating formulations. The talc particles are very easily embedded in the polymer layers, thus significantly reducing sticking during the film forming process. Talc also reduces the porosity of film coating and lowers their water permeability.

"Enteric polymers" means polymers which remain insoluble in the stomach, but dissolve at higher pH of the intestine. They are used to deliver drugs to the small intestine. 25 Enteric coating also prevents drugs from degradation by gastric fluid and enzymes. Enteric polymers include, but are not limited to cellulose acetate phtalate, hydroxypropylcellulose acetate phthalate, polyvinyl acetate phthalate, methacrylate-methacrylic acid copolymers, styrol, maleic acid copolymers, shellac, EudragitTM preferably but not limited to the L or S series, and others.

30 "Hydrophobic" refers to the property of a substance that is substantially repellant to water.

"Optional" or "optionally" means that the subsequently described event or circumstance may but need not occur, and that the description includes instances where the event or circumstance occurs and instances in which it does not.

"Labile" means that a linker group, under the appropriate physiological conditions, 5 will be rapidly and efficiently broken down thus decomposing the active compound.

"Core" means a starter material for pellet preparation deemed to encompass spheres, seeds, pellets, spheroids, granules, beads, particles, and the like. Examples of cores include, but are not limited to sugar spheres (non-pareils, neutral pellets, sugar spheres, Nu-Pareil, Nu-Core, sugar seeds.) or microcrystalline cellulose spheres Celphere®, most 10 preferably sugar spheres. Sugar spheres are approximately spherical granules of a labelled nominal-size range with a uniform diameter and containing not less than 62.5% and not more than 91.5% of sucrose, calculated on the dried basis. The remainder is chiefly starch.

According to the well known methods in the art, a number of contemporary pharmaceutical solid-dosage form processing trains including but not limited to 15 extrusion/spheronization, spray drying and fluidization, preferably fluidization can be carried out. Spherical cores (composition as per US Pharmacopeia (USP), preferably non-pareils) are coated preferably in a fluidized bed, with a first layer that comprises an enteric polymer such as acrylic polymers, alkylcelluloses and mixtures thereof, and optional hydrophobic excipients in a non-aqueous solvent such as alcohol. A preferred excipient is 20 talc, preferred polymers are shellac or Eudragit™ (preferably Eudragit L or S). After the drying of the first layer, the second layer that comprises the labile pharmaceutically active compound in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients in a non-aqueous solvent such as alcohol was sprayed on the first coating by conventional fluidized bed coating techniques. Preferred excipients comprise hydroxypropyl cellulose, e.g., Klucel EXF, or 25 Eudragit™ preferably but not limited to series RS 100 with talc. Optionally, a third layer that comprises an enteric polymer in a non-aqueous solvent, providing further stabilization, or allowing delayed or sustained release, is sprayed onto the second coating layer comprising the labile drug. A preferred polymer for the third layer is Eudragit™, preferably but not limited to series RS 100.

30 The pharmaceutical spheres of the present invention can be readily formulated per se or in combination with a conventional appropriate carrier into a delivery form such as, but not limited to, capsules or pellets.

EXAMPLE

In 1311.7 g of alcohol (200 proof), 1186.0 g of refined pharmaceutical glaze, National Formulary (NF), and 131.0 g of talc, USP, were added and mixed until a uniform dispersion was obtained. 3947.4 g of sugar spheres, NF were added to a fluidized bed 5 apparatus and the suspension was sprayed on the spheres. The spheres were dried before applying the second layer.

In 673.1 g of alcohol (200 proof), 24.8 g of hydroxypropyl cellulose, NF, 83.7 g of talc, USP and 50.0 g of micronized active compound of Formula I, wherein A is -OCH₂-, R¹ and R⁶ are methyl, R³ is chloro, and R², R⁴ and R⁵ are hydrogen, named N-[6-chloro-3-10 (4,5-dihydro-1H-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide, were dispersed. This dispersion was sprayed on to the spheres obtained from the first step and dried.

When needed, a third spraying step in which a dispersion with glaze and talc (identical to the first dispersion) was sprayed on the spheres coated with drug for 15 additional stabilization, and/or for allowing delayed or sustained release.

The coated spheres were filled into hard gelatin capsules and stored at 25⁰C and 60% relative humidity in high density polyethylene bottles. The degradation in the above capsules (expressed as percent of hydrolysis product deriving from the decomposition of N-[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1H-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-20 methanesulfonamide) was compared to the degradation in conventional tablets, prepared by the traditional wet granulation process and stored similarly. The results are shown in Table 1. The non-pareil capsule formulation showed lower levels of the hydrolysis product over extended periods of time compared to the tablets prepared by the conventional process and using conventional excipients.

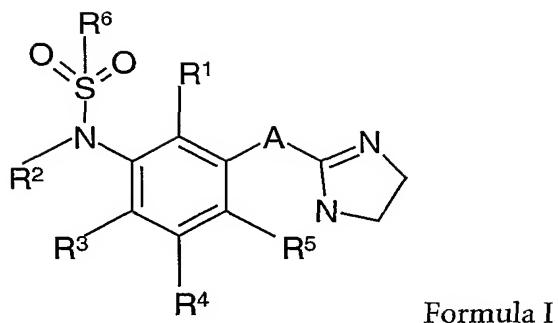
25 Table 1: Stability of non-pareil formulation compared to tablets prepared by traditional wet granulation and stored at 25⁰C and 60% relative humidity

Formulation	% of hydrolysis product at		
	Initial	1 month	3 months
Tablet	0.34	1.02	1.72
Capsule filled with non-pareils	0.50	0.59	0.33

Claims

1. A stabilized oral pharmaceutical formulation comprising:
 - a) a nucleus formed by a core;
 - b) a first layer that comprises a polymer coating sealing the core and optionally one or 5 more hydrophobic excipients; and
 - c) a second layer coating the first layer, wherein said second layer comprises one or more labile pharmaceutically active compounds in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients.
2. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 1, wherein the polymer coating 10 comprises an enteric polymer.
3. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the polymer coating comprises shellac or EudragitTM (L or S series).
4. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any preceding claim, wherein the one or more labile pharmaceutically active compounds in the second layer are susceptible to 15 hydrolytic degradation.
5. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any preceding claim, wherein the labile pharmaceutically active compound in the second layer is a compound containing an imidazoline moiety.
6. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 5, wherein the labile pharmaceutically 20 active compound in the second layer is a compound of Formula Ar-A-B, wherein Ar is a substituted aryl group, A is -NH-, -CH₂-, or -OCH₂-, and B is 2-imidazoline.
7. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 6, wherein the labile pharmaceutically active compound in the second layer is a compound of Formula I :

- 11 -



wherein :

A is -NH-, -CH₂-, or -OCH₂-;

5 R¹, R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are each independently in each occurrence hydrogen, (C₁-C₆) alkyl, or halogen;

R⁶ is (C₁-C₆) alkyl;

R² is hydrogen or (C₁-C₆) alkyl, or

10 R² and R³ taken together with the atoms to which they are attached may form a 5- or 6- membered ring;

or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

8. Pharmaceutical formulation according to claim 7, wherein the labile pharmaceutically active compound is a compound of Formula I, wherein A is -OCH₂-, R¹ and R⁶ are methyl, R³ is chloro, and R², R⁴ and R⁵ are hydrogen, named *N*-[6-chloro-3-(4,5-dihydro-1*H*-imidazol-2-ylmethoxy)-2-methyl-phenyl]-methanesulfonamide.
9. Pharmaceutical formulation according to any preceding claim, further comprising a third layer coating the second layer, wherein the third layer is an enteric polymer.
10. A process for the manufacture of a stable oral pharmaceutical formulation as claimed in anyone of claims 1 to 9, which process comprises the subsequent steps of:
 - 20 a) coating a core with a first layer sealing the core, wherein said first layer optionally contains one or more hydrophobic excipients in a non-aqueous solvent;
 - b) drying the first layer;

- 12 -

- c) coating the first layer with a second layer, wherein said second layer comprises one or more pharmaceutically active labile compounds, suspended in one or more acceptable hydrophobic excipients;
 - d) drying the second layer;
- 5 e) optionally coating the second layer with a third layer, wherein said third layer comprises an enteric polymer in a non-aqueous solvent, and
- f) drying the third layer.
11. A method of treatment of urinary incontinence comprising administering a stable oral pharmaceutical formulation as claimed in anyone of claims 1 to 9.
- 10 12. Method according to claim 11 comprising administering the stable oral formulation in capsules or pellets.
13. The invention as hereinbefore described.
